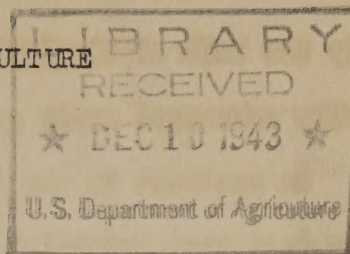


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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
Washington, D. C.



PEOPLE AND NATURAL RESOURCES

Address by Secretary of Agriculture Henry A. Wallace,  
at Bennington College, Bennington, Vt., on Saturday,  
June 15, 1940, at 11:30 A.M. (Eastern Daylight Saving Time.)

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We live in the most dangerous period in the world's history. Young people of today have a much greater responsibility than my generation or any preceding generation had.

My own grandparents and your great-grandparents, if they didn't like the situation here in the East, could move west and either homestead or buy the most fertile land in the world for less than \$5 an acre.

My grandfather Wallace, who was a United Presbyterian minister raised in the hills of Western Pennsylvania, 35 miles from Pittsburgh, came to Iowa as a result of the population pressure in the East, and started raising a family on his own account. This big family pressed severely on the family's economic resources. My grandmother's sister went to him and said, "I know the good book says, 'be fruitful and multiply and replenish the earth and subdue it' but I am sure, Henry, that the Lord did not expect one man to do it all by himself."

This morning I propose to discuss the pressure of population on natural resources, with special reference to Germany, the United States, and Latin America, and to relate these basic population problems of the twentieth century to the transcendent problem of perpetuating democracy and peace in the Western Hemisphere. The march of civilization has left many hinterlands where the balance of population and resources is abnormal. Some of these areas are in the United States and in other parts of the Western Hemisphere. It is these areas that are going to



supply the bulk of the increase in population during the next 25 years. These economically submerged areas are the seedbeds of Western Hemisphere democracy.

In contrast to the totalitarian nations, the genetic basis of democracy lies in the fact that potential leadership is as abundant in the submerged areas as in the others. Consequently, the more we can do to raise the economic and cultural environment of these areas to the best in Western Hemisphere standards the more certain we shall be that the torch of civilization will be held aloft in the Western Hemisphere and light the way of continuing democracy and peace.

The Germans more than any other nation have made the doctrine of "lebensraum" an excuse of war. Hitler describes the doctrine in Mein Kampf as follows: "The duty of the foreign policy of a national state is to insure the existence of the race included in that state by keeping a natural and healthy proportion between the numbers and the increase of the nation and the size and quality of the land in which they dwell. Nothing but sufficient space on the earth insures freedom of existence to a nation.\* \* \* We must again devote ourselves to representing the highest point of view of every foreign policy, that is to say, bringing the land into its proper proportion to the numbers of the population.\* \* \* \* As our forefathers did not receive the land on which we live today as a gift from heaven but had to conquer it by staking their lives, so in the future no act of grace by any people can assign to us the land, and throw light for our people, but only the force of a victorious sword.\* \* \* \* Do not look upon the Reich as secure if it cannot give for centuries to come its own piece of land and soil to every branch of our people. Never forget that the holiest right on this earth is the right to land for one's own cultivation and that the holiest sacrifice is the blood that one spills for this land."



That is the end of the quotation from Hitler's Mein Kampf.

Germany bases her claim for living space on the ground that the German race is superior genetically and that it is to inherit the earth because of superior capacity. Last week a lady who has long been actively connected with a movement known as The Country Women of the World called on me and among other things said she had spent some time in Bavaria, living in farm homes. She found that a rather large staff of Germans had been busy setting up what livestock producers who keep track of the blood lines of their stock would call a "herd book" for people. Every farmer who could prove that his grandparents were German and that they had no mixture of French, English, Jewish or other foreign blood received a certificate of racial purity which he could hang up proudly on his wall.

The European Germans of recent years, out of one side of their mouths, urge the creation of more German children, and, out of the other side, loudly ask for more territory to take care of the additional "superior" Germans whom they have created.

As Herr Schacht, former head of the Reichsbank, put it four years ago: "German 'lebensraum' is too narrow for the 70, 80 or 90 million inhabitants that we expect to have. \* \* \* \* We demand land and territory for the nourishment of our people and for settling our superfluous population. \* \* \* Peace in Europe and therefore, in the rest of the world depends on whether or not the crowded masses of Central Europe will obtain a possibility of life."

That is the end of the quotation from Herr Schacht.

He was voicing the views of a group which is determined to subjugate the world directly or indirectly by a combination of economic warfare, fifth column penetration, propaganda and controlled news, and Gestapo terrorism, with the sharp sword always ready to settle all arguments decisively. The German economic pincers are employed in exactly the same way as the military. The economic pressures are



used first and, if they do not by themselves yield enough loot, there is a practical certainty that military domination will be attempted, provided only that the booty can be obtained at not too great a cost.

In proportion to their arable land, Switzerland, Holland, and Belgium are all more than twice as densely populated as Germany. None of these countries has ever proposed to go to war in order to get "lebensraum." Of course, the Germans urge that Holland and Belgium have colonies. Switzerland, however, has no colonies and yet has been happy, busy and prosperous, despite a very dense population. Switzerland is not going to mobilize any army to get new territories for the very good reason that she has neither the might nor the desire to get by with such a project. The present German regime does have the might and is out to grab anything it can lay its hands on. The Prussian attitude toward other nations, as Veblen pointed out in 1915, is exactly the same as that of a commercial trapper in the northern woods toward fur-bearing animals. The utmost deceit and ruthlessness are to be used if they will pay in terms of loot.

The Germans look on this hemisphere as their eventual happy hunting grounds. Once the leaders of the German regime have stolen the soil of Europe and subjugated its people, they hope to channel New World exports to Europe through their own corporations, bartering in such a way as to create the maximum of economic nuisance value, looking toward eventual military penetration, and anticipation of the creation of military nuisance values which will yield either loot or conquest after the European model.

I am not defeatist enough to admit that the German method is going to win. But I am realist enough to ask what the world situation would be in case it did win. In such case the world would probably be divided for a time into four great spheres of influence. Number one in power would be the German-controlled area of Europe, Africa, and the territories which once were the British and French colonies of Asia.



Number two in power would be North and South America, with possibly Australia and New Zealand included. Number three would be Russia; number four Japan. The New World would have only about one-third as much population as the Germanic Old World but she would have twice as much in the way of petroleum reserves, six times as much in the way of coal reserves, and a slightly greater electric output. In terms of actual output of coal, the New World in recent years has been only about as productive as the Germanic world which may come into being. In terms of iron ore production, we should probably be about three-fourths as good, although we might be able to equal and even surpass the Old World if we had to do it.

If Germany wins, she will have the complete resources of the European and African continents and a slave population of 400 million people. She will be more powerful in many respects than all the New World put together. Force and force alone counts with Nazis. A German economist who was one of the ablest of all the statisticians in the German government before Hitler says that Germany has spent the equivalent of 20 billion dollars a year for five years on armaments. The American public is not even yet awake to the magnitude of the problem we are facing.

If a huge Germania corporation were to control the purchase of all of the exports of agricultural products from the New World to Europe, the effect would be felt on every farm and in every home in the New World. For example, 93 percent of the meat exports from Latin America go to Europe. This is a matter of the greatest concern to the Argentine, Uruguay and Brazil. If Argentina didn't like the terms of the Germania corporation, she might try to dump her meat on the American market to the disgust of the Western cattlemen. Seventy million dollars' worth of Latin American coffee go to Europe. This is a matter of great concern to Brazil, Colombia, Venezuela, Guatemala, Salvador and Costa Rica. Nearly 70 million



dollars' worth of wool go from Latin America to Europe, chiefly from Argentina and Uruguay. More than 50 million dollars' worth of cotton, mostly from Brazil, have found a market in Europe. Argentina markets about 35 million dollars' worth of linseed and 50 million dollars' worth of corn annually in Europe. Cuba sells about 25 million dollars' worth of sugar. Argentina sells about 40 million dollars' worth of wheat, oats, and minor cereals. Of the 550 million dollars' worth of Latin American agricultural products normally sent each year to Europe, the greater part comes from Brazil and Argentina. These two nations both have strong racial minorities whose sympathies may possibly be with Germany and Italy. Both Brazil and Argentina are exceedingly rich in potentialities; both have small populations relative to their huge natural resources. The Germans cannot help looking at them as two of the richest prizes on this hemisphere.



The United States has normally sent agricultural exports to Europe worth about the same or a little more than the agricultural exports of Latin America. Of our exports of tobacco, wheat, cotton, apples, pears, dried prunes, raisins, cured pork and barley, we normally send from 70 to 80 percent to Europe. Of our canned fruit and oil cake exports, we send from 90 to 100 percent to Europe. In the case of lard, two-thirds ordinarily goes to Europe. From one-half to three-fourths of our corn exports find their way to Europe. It would seem therefore that Europe absorbs as high a percentage of agricultural exports from the United States as of the agricultural exports from Latin America.

In the case of Canada, European exports are fully as significant as with either the United States or Latin America. Canada's exports to Europe are ordinarily worth about 200 million dollars. Nearly all of her apple, lard, cured pork and tobacco exports go to Europe. Of Canada's wheat exports, which ordinarily amount to a little over 100 million dollars, 85 percent goes to Europe.

It may be seen, therefore, that this entire hemisphere has a tremendous stake in the European market. If Europe organizes herself, so that all buying is done through one corporation, it is obvious that this hemisphere will have before it a job of consultation about the immediate organization of an effective bartering agency sufficiently powerful to play the same game as the Germans.

The urgent nature of the problem we in this hemisphere face is brought out as we study population figures. Brazil and Argentina each have only about 13 people to the square mile. This compares with the United States' 42, Great Britain's 500, Holland's 650, and Belgium's 700. Germany has 360 and little Switzerland, which is so nearly all mountains, 260. When we take into account



the soil, the rainfall, coal resources, oil resources, and so forth, we find that in the New World the pressure of population on resources is only about one-fifth as great as in Europe, Asia, or Africa. For this we are deeply grateful. About this we are tremendously concerned. Japan has 460 people per square mile, China 300 and India 200. In proportion to her natural resources, India is perhaps more densely populated than any other country in the world. Countries which have an exceedingly heavy population relative to their natural resources and which do not succeed in developing effective industrial production inevitably have a small income per capita. Life is hard. Wages are low. It is easy for demagogues to get a following. If such demagogues are clever, they can cause, first, nation-wide and finally world-wide trouble. Fortunately for us, India is restrained both by a religion of non-resistance and the absence of war-making materials. To a lesser extent, the same also holds good for China.

It is easy for any student of population to realize that the New World is like a magnet which tends to draw to it the surplus population of Asia and Europe. Our problem is to develop the New World by means of an increased number of people who have or can be imbued with those ideas which are essential to a planned, efficient democracy. The pressure from the foes of democracy will be enormous, but we shall have to stand pat, making concessions only after we have carefully thought through our fundamental position.

The greatest opportunities of the future are certain to be on this hemisphere. Here is where unused resources are most abundant, where population is growing most rapidly, and where the young folks outnumber the old people most greatly. In Brazil, Argentina and most of Latin America, there are 40 children



under 14 years of age out of every 100 people. In Germany, England, France, and nearly all of Northwestern Europe, there are only 24 or 25 children under 14 years of age in every 100 people. As a matter of fact, in most of the countries in Northwestern Europe the old people over 50 years of age are nearly as numerous as the children under 14. In Latin America, on the other hand, there are three to four times as many children under 14 years of age as there are older people over 50. To some extent this is a reflection of the tropical climate and poor hospitalization, which result in a shorter life span, but it also means a young, pushing, growing population.

The most rapidly-growing populations in the world today are in Latin America, Russia, and eastern Asia. The slowest-growing are in Northwestern Europe and New England. In the last 40 years the Latin American population has increased by nearly two and a half times. Canadian population has increased more than twice and the population of the United States has increased by 75 percent. But the rate of increase has been slowly going down. The United States will be only about 20 years behind Northwestern Europe in reaching a stationary population. Canada will be only about 10 years behind the United States. The Latin American nations will probably be 30 or 40 years behind the United States.

With regard to future population increases in Europe and Asia, prediction at the present time is unusually hazardous. It is possible, in case Germany wins, that she may be able by propaganda methods and the application of German ingenuity over a wider territory, to bring about some increase in the German birth rate. At the same time the populations which she has conquered may be affected by economic hardship and discouragement and tend to die out, as the Indians seemed to do for a time.



No matter who wins this war, I have the belief that when the war comes to an end there will be more light and hope on this hemisphere ~~than anywhere else~~ on this troubled earth. In nearly all of the New World, population ~~pressure~~ on natural resources is far less than in any other large area and the economic after-effects of the war will almost certainly be less. If we in the United States are to be safe in this favored position, it is exceedingly important that we should be better informed concerning the history and culture of the 20 Latin American republics. In studying the 18 Spanish-speaking republics, it is important to remember that their culture is no more Spanish than the culture of the United States is English. True it is that many of our customs are English and many of their customs are Spanish, but we are both drawn together by the American belief in a democratic progressive future which is based in considerable measure on the fact that we both have tremendous natural resources and a rather small population. None of the countries of Latin America intends to see these resources drained off to Europe or Asia in a way which harms our future. The great liberators of Latin America got their ideas about the rights of man from the United States and from France. The Latin-American and English-speaking American traditions can be united in the name of America if we in the United States will give as much time and effort to understanding Latin America as the Latin Americans are giving to the understanding of the United States. If we do not do our part, the day may easily come when in Latin America we shall be faced with many types of hyphenated Americans who will feel that their primary allegiance is to one or another of the various types of dictatorship overseas. The magnetic current of American good will, good trade, understanding, culture, language, and travel should run more largely North and South rather than East and West.



The future growth in economic well-being of the Western Hemisphere and our ability to raise the standards of living of our backward regions would suffer greatly if we allowed ourselves to develop any notions with respect to racial or regional superiority. The German claim of racial superiority is an outstanding case in point that has neither scientific basis nor ultimate good in it for Germany or any other nation. Charles Darwin and modern agricultural science must share blame with Hitler and his secretary of agriculture for this weird doctrine. Darwin, in evolving his theory of natural selection and the survival of the fittest, furnished a pseudoscientific foundation for much of the ruthlessness which characterizes human relationships in this century. Modern agricultural science has taught farmers to realize that a thoroughbred horse can run faster than a coldblood, that a Holstein cow will give more milk than a Hereford, and that a White Leghorn will lay more eggs than a Cornish Indian game. It is easy, therefore, for farmers to believe that some races of human beings are superior by heredity to others.

Hitler and his secretary of agriculture have endeavored most strenuously to get the German farmers to carry over their knowledge of animal breeding from the barnyard to the home. Whether or not this was good politics I do not know. But I do know that it was poor science. So far as inborn traits are concerned the people of Northern Germany are certainly not substantially different from those of Northern Poland, Latvia, Lithuania, Estonia, Denmark, Holland, Belgium, Northern France, or England.

No modern anthropologist will admit that the Prussians by inborn nature are bloodthirsty, domineering, brutish men. It is probable that only the accident of the place and time of their birth has kept the Prussians from being just as peace-loving as the Swedes and Danes. Neither is it likely that the Germans at birth have the capacity to work harder, to save more and engage more effec-



tively in scientific pursuits. By training they may be somewhat better in these respects than their neighbors to the East and West, but by inheritance I am convinced they are not one whit better. I have seen too many third and fourth generation Germans in the United States to believe that there is any difference between them and us in their genetic inheritance. Differences, if any, are due to training and not to inheritance. But in saying this I recognize that the millions of Germans living in Germany today are definitely different from us because of indoctrination systematically imposed from early youth. They have had more definite training in hard work. They believe more definitely in giving their all to the fatherland. Many of them believe that war is holy and that the achievement of German domination justifies any means however brutal or destructive and however much other peoples are deprived of their rights to the soil which they have cultivated for countless generations. If a thousand American children or a thousand German Jews at one year of age had been adopted into a thousand Nazi families 20 years ago, they would today be indistinguishable in their Nazi-German characteristics from the native-born Germans.

German efficiency in science, factory production and war is rather easily explained. England and France about 150 years ago laid the foundation for the modern industrial era with a certain amount of help from the United States. For several decades Germany slumbered on, using handicraft methods and the frugal, thrifty, social customs which inevitably go with such methods. In the last half of the last century she suddenly woke up and found lying ready to her hands the scientific methods and the factory systems already worked out by England, France, and the United States. She didn't have to go through our mistakes but she had the benefit which the new builder of a factory always enjoys. Moreover in England



and France efficiency had been slowed down because many types of sabotaging of the General Welfare for selfish purposes had been developed. Germany, who had stepped from the feudal age into modern times, was able for a full generation to avoid these wastes. It was practically certain, therefore, that within a few years her factories would be more efficient than the British factories.

Something of the same is true of Germany's recent military history. After long military preparation she had a major defeat in 1918, which shook her faith in her military techniques. Then the allies withheld from Germany all the military equipment that was then in accepted use. As she had had a clean slate for industrial development earlier, she now had a clean slate for military development. Also, as earlier, she could draw on the development in military technology in all the rest of the world without being restrained by vested interests in existing equipment and existing techniques.

It is obvious that the German advantage is a passing one and is due to the accidental combination of a number of circumstances which probably will not repeat themselves. Whether or not the Germans win the present war, the chances are that they are on their way out as a dominating race. They have made and will make many unique contributions to the world of tomorrow, and, as I have said, if they win this war their birth rate may increase slightly for a time. But unfortunately for them their philosophical extremism, their feeling of racial superiority, their repudiation of all moral standards, and their traditional antipathy to democracy will cause them eventually to decline. It would now seem probable that we are seeing the last German bid for world power.



No true student of genetics can cast lightly aside the thought that any prolific race which may happen to be located in the right spot to utilize profitably the most recent discoveries of science may for a time carry high the torch of civilization before passing it on to still another race. The scientist would be foolish to scorn the eventual possibilities of the Russians, the Japanese, the Chinese, or the Latin Americans. We know that the Indians of Latin America long before the time of Columbus perfected civilizations comparing very favorably with any of the ancient civilizations and in some respects even favorably with modern ones. For a time they seem to have had a more exact knowledge of astronomy and other sciences than any of the other peoples of their day. No one of course can ignore the ancient glories of China and Japan. These races might by heredity be somewhat different from the Germans, the English, or the French, but no one can say with any certainty that they are inferior or that when their opportunity comes they will not be able to make good use of it.

During the next hundred years it seems to me to be almost certain that the growing point of civilization will be found in the New World. For many decades the United States, because of her superior industrial development, great natural resources, and trained citizenry, will be the greatest single factor. We must consciously shoulder hemispheric responsibility, not only in terms of our own welfare but in terms of the welfare of these two continents.

In the United States the way we deal with certain features of our population problem will determine whether as a nation we are able to preserve the sacred rights of man and increase his physical well-being. We need first of all to have a better understanding of what I have called the genetic basis of democracy. We need to



realize and to capitalize the fact that so far as heredity is concerned the children from the best homes and the most well-to-do homes are probably very little if any more intelligent on the average than children from the worst sharecropper homes in the South. Of course, good food and good training within a few years make an enormous difference between the children of the well-to-do and the children of the poor. The point that I am making is that social and economic background is not inheritable. Undoubtedly some children are born with great possibilities for intellectual development and others are born with very poor possibilities. I am not denying that for a moment, but I am saying that there will be just about the same percentage of geniuses and the same percentage of morons among the children of poor people as among the children of wealthy people, provided that the two groups of children have the same opportunities. This is what might be called the genetic basis of democracy. It is a totally different concept from that which animates Hitler, from that which many farmers believe, and from that which many college professors of biology believe. I am sure most of the anthropologists, and perhaps a majority of the geneticists, will agree with me. Many of the well-to-do people and many of the college graduates will not agree, because the belief in the genetic basis of democracy takes from them a certain amount of psychic income which formerly they had enjoyed.

If you really believe in the genetic basis of democracy, you will not be much alarmed about some of the population figures which I am about to present. Today the largest families in the United States are found in the cotton states, the southern Appalachian mountains, Southern North Dakota, and the mountain valleys of Idaho and Utah. These families produce twice as many children as are needed to replace them-



selves. In the Southern mountains and the cotton area the average family has less than one-half as much plowland as elsewhere in the United States and the soil is lower in fertility. The average income is less than \$500 a year. In these States we find a situation very much like that in Russia and Japan, where the children under 14 years of age are nearly three times as numerous as the old people over 50 years of age.

In some quarters it seems to be fashionable to patronize the poor people of the South. For my own part I would not be surprised if the future of the United States belonged to them to a greater extent than most of us appreciate today. Some people have called them our "contemporary grandfathers." There is a lot of truth to this. For example, when I examine the population figures of 1840, I find that in the State of Vermont there were about three times as many children under 14 years of age as there were old people over 50. In a young state like Illinois there were actually 10 times as many young people as there were old people. A hundred years ago even the New England States like Vermont, New Hampshire, and Maine were more prolific in children than are Japan, Russia, and South America today. Tennessee, Alabama, Indiana, and Illinois a hundred years ago were much more prolific than any nation in the world today. Today Illinois produces scarcely enough children to replace the deaths. The day is soon coming when the maintenance of the population of Illinois will depend on migration from other states and especially from the farm areas of the South. New York and New Jersey are in about the same position.

It is interesting to note that when the population stops increasing and the old folks gain rapidly in number at the expense of the young people there is a brief period of illusory well-being. There is a temporary cashing-in process some-



what like that enjoyed by a man in middle life. In the rapidly-aging community there is usually more money, more wisdom, more caution and for a time a greater opportunity to cultivate the arts. In the young and rapidly-growing community there are many debts, little wisdom and not much culture. But the high percentage of young people is a tremendous fact which gives a buoyant faith in the future. Without reasoning it out, they know they are going somewhere. The fundamental trend of all great civilizations was born, I believe, among populations where the children under 14 outnumbered the old people by three to one. These young and growing communities have something akin to what we call nascent energy in chemistry. The South at the moment has this nascent energy. Alabama, for example, has 36 children under 14 compared with 13 people over 50. In New Hampshire, Vermont and Maine, on the other hand, there are only about 27 children under 14 compared with 23 people over 50. (In neither case do these figures include Negroes.) In no part of the United States do population conditions so resemble those of Sweden as in Northeastern New England. France, Sweden and Northeastern United States furnish outstanding examples of a wise, money-saving population with a high proportion of old people.

It would be altogether unscientific to urge that a population composed largely of young people is superior or inferior to one composed largely of old people. The important thing is to understand the possibilities of both types of population. The young population with its roots in the soil is dynamic and planless. The old population is thoughtful but somewhat lacking in energy. Sweden prior to the present war made the greatest success of any of the old populations. She had more nearly thought through the problems of class relationships and governmental relationships.



She had developed effective cooperatives which had learned to live tolerantly with business corporations. She had worked out the theory of the flexible budget which would stabilize the price level and compensate for the vagaries of the world business cycle. Labor and business had learned the need of mutual tolerance on behalf of the General Welfare. Sweden has no backward peoples to exploit. Neither does she have any responsibility for world leadership that now rests upon the larger and more powerful nations.

Thirty years hence, when the United States will have more than twice as many old people as today, we shall be forced to do on a big scale what Sweden has done in a small way.

The relationship between an old population and a young population is always fascinating, especially when they are both in the same sphere of influence. Invariably the money which the old population lends to the young population is not fully paid back, especially in times of bad weather or world catastrophe. The two populations then blame each other. For example. -- North Dakota cusses New York. The United States has not always understood Mexico. It is obvious that in the future the debtor-creditor relationships between a young and an old population must be worked out with far greater skill than has been displayed thus far. Here is room for a political science the wisdom of which will determine the security and solidarity of this hemisphere. The financial mind which deals in this field must be completely at home in the most recent technological developments. It must plan continually how to enable the young, debtor populations to pay in terms of goods which the old creditor populations are eager to receive at a fair price. It is possible to make the debtor regions of both the United States and other countries feel more kindly toward New York. It is possible to make such regions willing to



assume their fair responsibilities. Fairness, firmness, patience, and understanding of the underlying technological, social and economic facts are needed. Above all we must realize that it is no favor to anyone to loan money which can never be paid back. We must loan money to debtors so they can produce things we are eager to accept. Unless we are willing to plan in such terms the future is certain to be full of discord.

The relationship of a young population to huge natural resources is a rather simple problem. Take, for example, the economic strides of Illinois since 1840 and the potentialities in the resources and people of Argentina or of Russia today. But when we have a young population and small natural resources the problem requires the utmost ingenuity and sympathy. Take, for example, Southeastern United States where there are twice as many people on the farms as in 1860, but the acreage is smaller and the soil is much poorer. Puerto Rico, where the population is denser than in Belgium, is another example. Japan and India are of course the most outstanding examples in all the world. It would seem that the only way out for these exceedingly dense, young populations is education. And yet it may be that the dynamic power of an over-crowded young population will take things into its own hands and force the issue either consciously or unconsciously. In this connection it must be remembered that the dynamic power of a young population does not last many generations. Germany undoubtedly passed her peak in this respect more than 30 years ago. Her present drive is one which finds its origin in the ideology of alleged superior Nazi economic and warlike efficiency combined with the doctrine of racial superiority. The German drive does not find its origin in the population pressure of an over-crowded young people in the same sense as the Japanese.



If the next hundred years in the United States move in the same direction as the past hundred years, we may expect that nearly our entire population will have characteristics like the present day characteristics of New England, France, and Sweden. The question is as to whether we can grow old as gracefully as Sweden has done. Can we become socially wise? Can we in a kindly yet firm manner develop a sound big brother relationship to the younger populations in the rest of this hemisphere which during the next hundred years will be going through the changes which we were going through during the past 100 years? It must be remembered that a wealthy old population like the United States of 1960 will have the privilege through its wealth of assisting many of the activities of the younger peoples of this hemisphere.

There are two points of view that are sometimes held with respect to the surplus population of the United States. From the standpoint of the good Episcopalian rector whose name was Malthus, it is rather difficult to prove that there is much surplus population in the United States. But from the standpoint of the German gentleman whose name was Marx, it is easy to prove that technology has created a great surplus of population. The average size of a farm in the United States is 160 acres as compared with 30 acres in France, 15 acres in Switzerland, and 3 acres in Japan. It is hard to believe therefore that there is any very great Malthusian pressure of population on natural resources in the United States. But the problem is not quite that simple. Half the farm people in the United States produce about 90 percent of the farm products which are sold on the market. Half the farmers of the South live on farms which are less than 40 acres in size. With a little scientific rearrangement, that half of the farmers which is most efficient could easily produce all of the farm products which are sold commercially. Fifteen years ago one of the most popular remedies for the farm problem was to get rid of the inefficient half of the farmers. Generally speaking, this was the half which



had the lowest income and the biggest families, the half which lives in houses worth \$500 or less.

In those old days before the depression, when unemployment was just beginning to show up in the cities, I used laughingly to say to the economists who urged greater efficiency and fewer farmers that apparently their cure was to chloroform the inefficient farmers and the unemployed city people. Somehow I have great respect for the million and a half small farmers in the United States who operate less than 50 acres of land, who have large families and small incomes. I like to think that the verse of the Psalmist especially applies to them: "The stone which the builders refused is become the headstone of the corner. This is the Lord's doing; it is marvelous in our eyes."

And truly it is marvelous the way in which the downtrodden and despised of one generation so often become the progenitors of the powerful of another generation a hundred years hence. This does not mean we should not do our best to solve the population problem of the Southern mountains and the Cotton Belt. On the contrary, because I have so much faith in the potentialities of these people, I would suggest that education will bring greater returns in this area than in any other part of the United States.

Surplus population resulting from technology is just as real as surplus population resulting from Malthusian pressure. The Arkies and Okies who have been tracted off their farms and are wandering up and down the highways of California in their antiquated Fords, know that even though the United States is thinly populated, technological pressure is just as real a thing as Malthusian pressure. Generally speaking they are inherently intelligent, hard-working and thrifty, but as a rule they have been poorly educated and have played in hard luck.

While it is not generally recognized, it should be pointed out that there are a good many farms in Vermont, New Hampshire and Maine, which contain such a



small area of poor land that it is impossible to make a much better living from them than that enjoyed by the farmers of the Southern Appalachians and the Cotton Belt. These smaller New England farmers have usually managed to survive by getting work in the factories either for themselves or some member of their family. Or perhaps they minister to summer boarders. But if anything should ever happen to their factory jobs or to their summer boarder crop they would be in a position as difficult as that of the sharecropper in the South. As a matter of fact you can find some desperate situations of this sort at the present time, although in the main the New England population conforms to a totally different pattern than that of the South.

The Farm Security Administration in a broad sense is an agency dedicated to cultivating part of the seed bed of democracy -- that part where families have an income of only \$400 a year or less. It has improved the economic environment and health of hundreds of thousands of farm families and they have thus become better citizens and parents. It has loaned 370 million dollars to 800,000 of them. The loans are supervised at the rate of about 150 to each county supervisor. It is because of the supervision that these people are going to repay eventually about 80 percent of that which they have borrowed. These Farm Security loans are by all odds the cheapest relief which the Federal government offers to anyone. Including the supervising expense and the losses, it has been proved possible to bring about rehabilitation of the average down-and-out rural family at a cost of about \$72. This compares with city relief costs averaging nearly \$800 a year. But above all it is the fact that we are doing something constructive to alter the environment of the least-privileged part of our population that appeals to me as significant and vital.



Another effort at bringing our economically sub-standard regions into line with the more prosperous is rural electrification. Ten years ago less than 10 percent of the farms of the United States had high-line electricity. Today 25 percent of them have such service and in a few more years half of them will have available reasonably-priced electricity to lighten the load of both the wife in the home and the farmer in the barn. Paved roads, high-line electricity and other modern household conveniences are certain in my opinion to have a profound effect eventually on population distribution and living standards. Some day suitable inventions are going to be made which will enable the small community and even the single farm home by itself to be much more nearly self-supporting than at the present time. The steam engine drove people into the great cities. Rural electrification will eventually put millions of them back on the land again. All of this will not interfere greatly with commercial agriculture in the corn, wheat and cotton belts. But there will be gradually developed a science of part-time farming, self-subsistence farming and cottage or small community industry based on rural electrification. Most of the early efforts along this line will no doubt be failures and yet I am convinced if something of this sort is not worked out carefully to appeal to the constructive instinct of humanity, we shall have unemployed city people and inefficient farmers in such large numbers that our future generations will be coming too largely from those who have had little education and whose attitude is more or less hopeless. We must give a more constructive outlet to those families with large numbers of children.

There are still other efforts that we are engaged in that are intended to spread prosperity more evenly in the long run over our rural population than in the past. I have in mind the aims and activities of the Soil Conservation Service, Forest Service, Triple A and the planning work done in the Bureau of Agricultural



Economics. These four agencies, working together and in cooperation with the National Resources Planning Board and the farmer, are probably doing the most thoughtful and far-reaching job in correlating population with natural resources that is being done any place in the world.

Man has not yet demonstrated his ability to develop a high civilization over a period of centuries under conditions like those which exist west of the Missouri River. Only under soil and climatic conditions like those which exist in North-eastern United States and Western Europe has man so far been able to stabilize a civilization. We are proud, therefore, to have made a start on this problem of our own West.

The white man in the United States has been peculiarly destructive in his over-plowing, over-grazing and over-cutting of trees. Thirty-five years ago Theodore Roosevelt was the first to dramatize the need for the conservation of soil, water, grass and trees. In the present administration we are going further, recognizing that human conservation must be continuously woven in with the water, soil, grass and tree conservation.

Through our AAA, SCS, Ever Normal Granary and the county planning work, I believe we are in position not only to build a better rural American but in times of distress to feed the starving multitudes of the world without destroying our own soil as we did in the last great war. In every agricultural county of the United States, we have effective county committees which know just how to get production without soil destruction whenever the increased production may be needed. The Bureau of Agricultural Economics, through its county and State planning work, is coordinating the activities of the action agencies which have to do with soil, water, grass, and trees. If the government will back up this agency effectively, I am confident that we can work out in action the fundamental methods necessary



to make possible the survival of a high standard of living under continental conditions like those of Western United States. It is going to require tremendous changes in our thinking because all the farming traditions of the white man of Western Europe and Northeastern United States were developed under a totally different soil and climate.

From time to time I have driven over the great bridges of San Francisco which were opened several years ago and have marvelled at the engineers who were able to draw their plans with such precision. I wish we could get the same kind of an intellect to feel that it is right and proper to draw alternative blueprints for nation-building and hemisphere-building. In a democracy especially it is important to talk about these things because we never get anywhere in a democracy unless we do talk.

In conclusion, I would like to say again that anyone who studies the natural resources of this country in relation to the world, that anyone who studies the population of this hemisphere in relation to its natural resources, cannot help reaching the conclusion that the world civilization of the next hundred years, at least, depends chiefly on us. New scientific discoveries may shift the importance of natural resources as we now know them. It is possible that the science of the future combined with the more rapidly-growing population of Canada and Latin America may eventually reduce the importance of the United States on this hemisphere. The immediate future, however, is ours in a most extraordinary degree; I have no question whatever about the opportunity. My only question has to do with whether we shall wake up sufficiently after this World War to conduct ourselves with a wisdom greater than that which we employed after World War No. 1. Twenty years ago we were like a boy who has had to take on family responsibilities at the age of 16. We are older now; we have benefitted from that experience, and we can and will do a better job after World War No. 2.



My final word to you as college students is two-fold:

First, become aware of the natural resources of this whole hemisphere and of the action which must be taken to prevent these resources from being destroyed by man inside this hemisphere or by unfriendly nations from overseas.

Second, become fully acquainted with either the Spanish or the Portuguese language and with the culture of Latin America. I hope the day will come when college graduates will know as much about the lives of Simón Bolívar, San Martín, Santander, Hidalgo, Juárez, Sucre, and Cardenas as they do about the lives of Washington, Jefferson, Lincoln and Franklin D. Roosevelt. I trust the college students of the future will know almost as much about Cervantes as they do about Shakespeare. The greatest contribution which the college faculties of the nation can make to the future security and happiness of this hemisphere is to encourage the study of Inter-American relationships from the standpoint of language, culture, natural resources, economics and politics.

The world has become one world in a most sudden, alarming, and complete sense. Many of us who have been raised in the world of yesterday will find it difficult to change our attitudes. On the younger people rests responsibility for understanding the world as it actually is today, in order that they can make every minute of every day count toward building security for those sacred democratic rights for which the peoples of this hemisphere stand.

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